

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8093

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13597

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, UR, TU, GR

SUBJECT: SOVIET APPROACH TO AEGEAN DISPUTE: LOCAL REACTION

REF: A. ATHENS 8744, B. ATHENS 8642, C. ANKARA 6290

1. SUMMARY. RECENT EMBASSY CONVERSATIONS WITH LOCAL TURKS AND GREEKS (TURKISH DCM KAMEL AUGUST 26, TURKISH FIRST SEC ATAMAN AUGUST 25, GREEK POL COUNSELOR POLITIS AUGUST 26) HAVE EVOKED MORE HEAT THAN LIGHT ON SOVIET APPROACH TO AEGEAN DISPUTE, THOUGH ALL AGREE CONCERN OVER FREE PASSAGE IS CENTRAL FOR SOVIETS AND DRIVES THEM DE FACTO TO TURKISH SIDE DESPITE FORMAL NEUTRALITY. TURKS MADE POINT THAT IF GREEKS ARE ENCOURAGED IN MARITIME ISSUES THEY WILL SURELY EXTEND TERRITORIAL WATERS TO 12 MILES; IMPLICATION IS THEY ARE MAKING SAME POINT WITH SOVIETS. AT SAME TIME, SCENE OF ACTION IS CLEARLY ATHENS AND ANKARA RATHER THAN MOSCOW. END SUMMARY.

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WM KAMEL AND ATAMAN CONFIRMED SUBSTANCE OF PARA 4

REF C, THAT SOVIETS HAD DELIVERED NOTE IN ANKARA PARALLEL TO THE ONE DELIVERED IN ATHENS, STRESSING NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITHOUT RESORT TO THREAT OR USE OF FORCE AND FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION. KAMEL SAW INTEREST IN FREE NAVIGATION AS NATURAL TO THE SOVIETS, SINCE GREEK CLAIM THAT ISLANDS HAVE SHELVES AND TURKISH LANDMASS HAS NONE WOULD TURN AEGEAN INTO A GREEK SEA. IF GREEKS ARE ENCOURAGED IN ANY WAY ON MARITIME ISSUES, THEY WILL EXTEND THEIR TERRITORIAL WATERS TO 12 MILES, AND SOVIETS KNOW IT. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SAY SO, IT SOUNDED AS IF TURKS HAVE DRAWN SOVIET ATTENTION TO THIS "ASPECT" OF PROBLEM. END COMMENT.

3. POLITIS, LONGTIME CYPRUS HAND ABOUT TO DEPART MOSCOW, WAS FULL OF HURT AND BILE OVER WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS OBVIOUS DE FACTO TILT DESPITE CAREFUL NEUTRALITY OF FORMAL SOVIET POSITION. GREECE IS SURROUNDED BY "NEUTRAL" ON-LOOKERS ENCOURAGING IT TO BOIL IN ITS OWN FAT, HE SAID. FREEDOM OF PASSAGE IS MAIN SHORT-RANGE SOVIET CONCERN: IT IS AMAZING, HE COMMENTED, HOW POWERS WITH LAWYERS WHO ARE SO CAREFUL ON OTHER TOPICS CAN BE SO SLOPPY, AND PREFER TO MIX "FREE PASSAGE" WITH "INNOCENT PASSAGE". OVER LONG TERM, MAIN SOVIET INTEREST IS TO KEEP POT BOILING UNTIL CHANGES OCCUR IN EITHER GREECE OR TURKEY WHICH DROP ONE OR THE OTHER INTO SOVIET LAP "LIKE A RIPE FIG;" HE THOUGHT THERE WAS MORE GROUND FOR OPTIMISM, FROM THE SOVIET POINT OF VIEW, ON TURKEY, BUT THEN BEGAN TO DISCOURSE ON HOW KARAMANLIS WILL NOT ENJOY PRESENT AUTHORITY IN GREECE FOREVER. TALK WAS LIBERALLY SPRINKLED WITH REFERENCES TO THE WAS "SUPERPOWERS" BEHAVE, OBVIOUSLY NOT LIMITED IN HIS MIND TO USSR.

4. COMMENT: CONTRAST BETWEEN TURKISH SERENITY AND GREEK ANGER IS MAIN LOCAL EFFECT OF SOVIET EVENHANDEDNESS, BUT ACTION IS OBVIOUSLY IN ATHENS AND ANKARA RATHER THAN MOSCOW. CONCEIVABLY, SOVIET APPROACH COULD SWEETEN UP TURKISH ATTITUDE TOWARD "POLITICAL DOCUMENT" AND DEMIREL VISIT. WE HOPE TO BE KEPT ON LINE FOR REPORTING. END COMMENT.

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